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Sunday School Dialogues:

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BEING AN

ABRIDGMENT OF A WORK,

By M. P. *P*

Entitled, "The FIRST PRINCIPLES OF RELIGION, and the Existence of a Deity, explained in a Series of Dialogues, adapted to the Capacity of the INFANT MIND."

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ALPHABETICALLY OF A WORK

H. M. B. 1864

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE scarcity of books adapted to the capacities of children, in the lower classes of life, precludes the necessity of an apology for presenting the Public with the following Abridgement; for I am persuaded, that the high degree of estimation, in which the original work has long been held, will secure it a favourable reception, as the sentiments and language are preserved, with such variations only as the present appropriation of the plan requires, in order to extend the benefit, which has already been widely diffused.

I esteem myself greatly obliged to the unknown, but truly respectable Author, for her ready compliance with a request, which I should not have taken the liberty of making, but from a desire of imparting to those, whose improvement in Religion and Morality is one of the first objects of my wishes, important instruction, in an inviting and pleasing dress.

S. TRIMMER.

SUNDAY SCHOOL DIALOGUES,
Sunday School Dialogues, &c.

TEACHER.
DIALOGUE I.

TEACHER.

WHO made you, *Mary*?

MARY.

My mother says that God made me, Madam.

TEACHER.

She tells you the truth, my dear.

MARY.

Pray, Madam, did God make sheep, and other things that are alive?

TEACHER.

Yes, God is the Maker, or Creator, of every thing, of the world, of the sun, of the sky, of the ground, of the fruits, of the grass, of the cattle, of mankind, and of every living creature.

MARY.

Did God make all the men, and women, and children; and all the cows, and sheep, and horses, and birds, and fishes, and every thing?

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear, God made every thing. Only think what a vast difference there is betwixt God and

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a little child, that cannot make any thing, or even take care of itself! ought not you to be afraid, *Mary*, of making this great God angry?

MARY.

Yes, Madam. Is there only one God?

TEACHER.

Only one.

MARY.

Pray, Madam, what is God like ?

TRACHER.

Nothing can be like God.

MARY

I should like to see God.

TEACHER.

That you cannot do. YRAM.

MARY.

Why not, Madam?

TEACHER.

Because our eyes could not bear to behold the glory of God. You cannot look at the sun, can you? No. And so of the radiance of the ground.

MARY.

No, Madam, not when it shines bright.

TRACHER.

Much less could you bear to behold the majesty of the great God, who made the sun, moon, and stars.

TACER.

MARY

Where is God, Madam?

TEACHER.

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TEACHER.

God is every where, though we cannot see Him. He made us, and made the world for us to live in; and makes corn grow for our bread, and fruit for us to eat, and water for us to drink, and lets the sun shine every day to give us light. Is not all this very kind and good?

MARY.

Yes, Madam. Pray, can God's eyes see us?

TEACHER.

We must not think of God as having eyes, my dear. God is not like us, or like any thing that ever was seen. God is so wonderful that men and women always know too little to understand His nature. We only know that God is very good and wise, and made all things, and takes care of all things, and knows all things, and loves all people who are good; and that we must always strive to do what is right, and be thankful to God for all the blessings we enjoy. I hope, Mary, you will love, as well as fear God; for you now know why you should do so?

DIALOGUE II.

MARY.

I HAVE been thinking, Madam, and wondering, how you came to know all that you told me about God last Sunday.

B 2

TEACHER.

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TEACHER.

My father and mother told me first of all; and afterwards I read about God and his ways, in the book which the great girls read every Sunday.

MARY.

What book teaches about God, Madam?

TEACHER.

The Bible, my dear: as soon as you can you shall read it as often as you please; but not yet. People should not read the Bible till they can read very well indeed; but you hear it read by the clergyman at church: when he reads, do you understand what he reads?

MARY.

No, Madam.

TEACHER.

Then I fear you look about, and think of something else; you should listen, and try to attend to what he reads.

MARY.

What does he read for, Madam?

TEACHER.

To instruct us about God: we all want to know about God as well as you.

MARY.

And is that what we go to church for?

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear, that is one purpose we go for.

MARY.

MARY.

But I have heard that people go to church to say prayers. What does that mean?

TEACHER.

Prayer, my dear, is speaking to God. Prayer is begging God to grant us victuals, and drink, and cloaths, and every thing that is proper for us. Another kind of prayer is called Praise, which is thanking God for all the good things we already have, and for giving us health, and the use of our hands, and legs, and ears, and eyes, and tongue; and for every pleasure we enjoy. All good things are the gift of God, therefore it is but right, you know, that we should be thankful, and beg for a continuance of them.

MARY.

So that is what people go to church and pray for?

TEACHER.

Yes, indeed, it is; and as we want victuals and drink, and many other things every day, we must ask for them every day, or else God will be angry; and you told me, you know, that you were afraid of making God angry.

MARY.

Pray, Madam, teach me how to pray. I do not know what to say to God?

TEACHER.

What do you want to pray for?

B 3

MARY.

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MARY.

I want to beg of God to give me things, and to make Him love me.

TEACHER.

Learn this prayer then.—O great and good God, I beg of thee to give me this day victuals and drink, and all things proper for me; and make me a good girl. And I thank thee for all the blessings I have.—Do you understand that?

MARY.

Yes, Madam.

TEACHER.

To whom do you say these words?

MARY.

To God. But how do you know, Madam, that God likes we should pray to him?

TEACHER.

Because the Bible teaches me so; and whatever the Bible teaches is true. It is written there, that God will be pleased with those who pray, and try to be good; and that God likes people should meet together in Churches to pray, and thank Him for the blessings bestowed upon all mankind.

MARY.

Then I fear God does not love me: I never good praying before. I thought it was only down, and saying a few words to my

TEACHER.

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TEACHER.
God knows, my dear, that you are but a little child, and did not know how; now, you do know you must pray every day, or else God will be angry with you; when once people understand what praying is, they must never neglect it, because God will not love them; and that will be a sad thing indeed; for God is kinder and better than all the people in the world.

MARY.
What! better than my father and mother, who love me so dearly? My father gave me this apple.

TEACHER.
Nobody, my dear, is so good and kind as God. Nobody can do so much for us: God gives us every thing, all that we have: your father could not have given you the apple if God had not made the apple-tree grow. We should have no bread if God did not first make the corn grow. God is the maker of every thing: should we not then love Him for being so very kind and good to us?

MARY.
Yes, I think we should: but I wish I could see God!

TEACHER.
That, my dear, I have told you we cannot do;

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do; but surely, without seeing God, when we see all things about us given by God's kindness, and love to us, we ought to be very thankful and very good. We have no other way of showing how much obliged to God we think ourselves, than by always trying to be good, and doing whatever He chuses.

MARY. But how can we know what God chuses?

How can we know what God chuses?

TEACHER.

By reading the Bible.

MARY.

Who made the Bible, Madam?

TEACHER.

Some very good men wrote it, that every body might know how to be good, and to do what will please God. God directed them what to write, and therefore they were sure it was what He pleased.

MARY.

How did God direct them, Madam?

TEACHER.

By putting into their minds what to write.

DIALOGUE

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DIALOGUE III.

MARY.

PRAY, Madam, should not every body kneel when they say their prayers?

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear.

MARY.

Then is not *Becky Thornton* wicked? for she sits at church all prayer times.

TEACHER.

We must not think, or call people wicked, *Mary*, without knowing the reason of their behaviour. *Becky Thornton* cannot kneel; she has a stiffness in her knee which prevents her; but she is not at all wicked for not kneeling: there is no wickedness in being lame. It is not kneeling, or any other posture we may put our bodies into, that will make God receive our prayers; it is the attention of our minds. We must think of what we are saying. We must recollect, that when we pray we are speaking to God who made us, to God who protects us, and gives us every blessing we enjoy; to God who will love, and make us happy for ever, if we are good; but will certainly punish us if we are wicked. Therefore, my dear, never think you pray as you

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you should do, because you kneel down; unless you all the time think of God, and attend to what you are saying, without minding any thing else in the world.

MARY.

Why then I need not kneel at all; I may sit when I pray.

TEACHER.

No, my dear, that will not be right, because you can kneel: you have no lameness to prevent you. If you sit, therefore, it will be because you are indolent and idle: people must not be indolent when they pray. Kneeling is a very humble posture; and we kneel to show that we humble ourselves before God. You make courtesies to ladies and gentlemen, you know, to show that you honour and respect them; and even ladies and gentlemen should kneel to God, to show that they honour God above all creatures.

DIALOGUE IV.

MARY.

How did God make all things, Madam?

TEACHER.

I cannot understand how God made trees, grass, and all living creatures out of nothing; but the

Bible

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Bible tells us that God really did so: and I am sure they could not make themselves; for men and women, who are the wisest creatures in this world, cannot make even so much as a small blade of grass. I therefore believe, that God made all things, though I cannot tell how.

MARY. Let him be praised.

For what were people made?

TEACHER. To be happy.

That they might be happy. God likes every thing should be happy.

MARY.

Is Mrs. Ailing happy, Madam, who is always ill?

TEACHER. Does God love her?

If she believes that God loves her, she may be happy in her mind, my dear, though she suffers pain in her body.

MARY.

I am glad I am not sick, Madam.

TEACHER.

So am I, my dear. Health is one of the things which we ought to be thankful for. But if God were to find it proper for you to be sick at any time, you must not fret and cry, for that would not be good. Sometimes God lets people be sick, and have trouble, to try how they will bear it; whether they will behave quietly and like good people, and think that all God does

is

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is for their benefit? or whether they will be naughty, and put no trust in Him.

MARY. Yes, dear, I know how

What is putting trust in God, Madam?

TEACHER. To believe that

Thinking that all God does is best and right, and that he will take care of those who love Him at all times, and bring them, when he sees fit, out of all their troubles.

MARY. Yes, dear, I know how

Does God love sick people?

TEACHER. Yes, if they are good, and behave well.

MARY. Yes, dear, I know how

Does God love ugly people?

TEACHER. Yes, my dear, just as well as if they were pretty, if they are good.

MARY. Yes, dear, I know how

Does God love poor people, Madam?

TEACHER. Just as well as he does the rich, and a great deal better, if the rich do not behave as well.

Godness is all that makes God love one person better than another, whether they be sick or well, ugly or pretty, poor or rich.

God is too good to love any one who is wicked.

MARY. Yes, dear, I know how

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MARY.

What is being wicked?

TEACHER.

Doing things which God has forbidden. All those who tell lies, steal, fight, quarrel, put themselves in passions, say wicked words, and do other things that the Bible teaches us not to do, are wicked. All cruel people, who hurt living creatures, are wicked too.

MARY.

Then I will try to be a very good child, Madam. I will not do wicked things; but will love God, and strive to please Him; and will think, that whether I am sick or well, God will love me, and take care of me.

TEACHER.

Do so, my dear, and God certainly will love and bless you; for the Bible tells us in a great many places, that He never forsakes those who love Him, and put their whole trust in Him.

DIALOGUE V.

TEACHER.

WHAT do you cry for, Mary?

MARY.

O Madam! my bird is dead. O, I am sorry indeed! Poor thing! Poor, poor thing, you are dead!

C

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TEACHER.

But why, my dear, do you say poor thing?

MARY.

Because it is dead, Madam.

TEACHER.

Well then, I think it is poor *Mary*, who has lost her bird, not poor Bird. If the bird is dead it is out of its pain. Yesterday it was very sick, and suffered a great deal; to-day it is dead, and feels no more. When creatures are dead they cannot feel.

MARY.

Will my bird never come to life again?

TEACHER.

Never, my dear.

MARY.

So there is an end of poor little *Dick*; and when I die there will be an end of me.

TEACHER.

Indeed there will not, *Mary*. Death does not put an end to men and women, and boys and girls; they will live in another world.

MARY.

But, Madam, the graves in the church-yard are the places where dead people are put, how can they go to another world and be in the church-yard at the same time?

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

It is the body of any one that is buried in the church-yard; but we have each of us a soul that will live for ever.

MARY.

What is the soul, Madam?

TEACHER.

The soul is no part of our outward body; it is neither our head, or our arms, or our legs, or our ears, or our eyes; nor all of them together; but it is something within us, with which we think, and understand, and reflect; to reflect is to think afterwards upon what we have said or done; or upon what we have seen, heard, or felt. The soul can live without the body, but the body cannot live without the soul; nor would the body have any more sense or feeling than a stone, or a bit of stick, if the soul did not give life to it. A time will come when the body and soul will be joined together again, and live for ever in the other world.

MARY.

How do you know that, Madam?

TEACHER.

The Bible teaches me so.

MARY.

Is the other world like this? shall we have houses there, Madam?

TEACHER.

No, my dear, the other world is not at all like this ; I have never seen it, and therefore cannot describe it to you : but I believe that there is another world, in which those who have been good here will be quite happy ; and those who have been wicked here quite miserable. Had not you rather go to another world after death, and be happy for ever, than never live any more ?

MARY.

Yes, Madam ?

TEACHER.

Then you should be very thankful to God for making you a human creature, and giving you hopes of everlasting life.

MARY.

What is everlasting life, Madam ?

TEACHER.

Life which will always last, and never end.

MARY.

What is a human creature ?

TEACHER.

Human creatures are men and women, boys and girls. Human creatures are capable of knowing what is right and what is wrong ; therefore, if they are wicked, God will punish them ; if they are good, God will reward them.

DIALOGUE

DIALOGUE VI.

MARY.

How will God reward and punish human creatures, Madam?

TEACHER.

God will reward human creatures by making them exceedingly happy; or punish them, by making them exceedingly miserable in another world. There is, in the other world, a place called Heaven, to which all who are good will go; and a place called Hell, to which all who are wicked will go. In Heaven there is no such thing as pain, sickness, or sorrow, but constant pleasure and joy, greater than we can conceive; in Hell there are no such things as ease, comfort, or pleasure, but constant pain, sorrow, and misery, worse than any thing we can fancy.

MARY.

I hope I shall not go to Hell!

TEACHER.

You must always strive to be good, and take particular care not to tell lies, or do any wicked thing; and pray to God every day; and then you will have no occasion to be afraid of going to Hell; for God will love you, and let you go to Heaven when you die.

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MARY.

I hope I shall go to Heaven! I want to go thither now!

TEACHER.

You have not died yet, my dear: you must die before you can go to Heaven. You must have patience till you die; you will die when God thinks proper; but till then you must live, and do all the good you can. Perhaps you may have a great deal of trouble before you die, and be sick, or very poor.

MARY.

I shall not like that.

TEACHER.

Nobody likes to be sick or poor; but if God chuses that we should be so, to punish us for having been wicked, or to make us think more of Heaven, and prevent our setting our minds too much on the things of this world, we must be good-humoured and patient, and bear whatever He thinks proper. It will not be a vast number of years before we shall go to Heaven, and then all our troubles will be at an end, and we shall never have any thing more to make us uneasy.

MARY.

But if we are naughty in Heaven what will become of us then?

TEACHER.

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TEACHER.

O! there is no fear of our being naughty in Heaven: we shall be wiser than we are now.

MARY.

Well then, Madam, if I fear God so as never to do wicked things, I need not be afraid of going to Hell?

TEACHER.

If you fear God in that manner, *Mary*, you will be comfortable in this world, let your condition be what it will; and you may be certain that God will take you to Heaven when you die.

DIALOGUE VII.

MARY.

IF God loves good people, Madam, why are some of them poor?

TEACHER.

Because God knows best what is proper for every one: this I am sure of, poor people will go to Heaven when they die, if they live good lives; and then they will no longer be poor and distressed, but as happy as if they had been rich. It is much better, and there is more comfort in being poor and good, than in being rich and wicked.

MARY.

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MARY.

Can poor people be as good as rich ones, Madam?

TEACHER.

They cannot do so much good in the way of charity; but if they are honest, sober, and industrious, they may be of as much use in the world, and please God as much as the richest.

MARY.

I am glad to hear that; pray, Madam, tell me how?

TEACHER.

Poor men and boys may plow the ground, dig in gardens, drive carts, and do many things which rich people have not strength to do. And poor women can wash, and iron, and clean houses, and do many other things which ladies cannot; nor is it fit they should; because God has appointed them to employ the poor, who could not get money if somebody did not set them to work to earn it.

MARY.

But why must poor people do these things any more than the rich?

TEACHER.

Because God placed them in a low station, and made it their duty to do so. It is no such hardship to be poor, Mary, as many people are apt to think, for good people always find friends to help

them

them in time of need ; and when they are well, working gives them health and spirits. Besides, it is very naughty and wicked to be idle ; every body should be employed. God did not make people to be idle. The Bible says, those people who will not work shall not eat.

MARY.

But rich people do not work, Madam.

TEACHER.

Not in the same way that poor people do ; but those who are good have a great deal of employment, in contriving how they shall make a proper use of their riches. I do assure you, that the greatest lady in this country is never idle.

MARY.

But poor people cannot be charitable, Madam.

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear, they can. Charity means kindness and love to every body, and being sorry when they are in any kind of trouble. Charity also makes people good-humoured to each other ; so that instead of being offended if people say, or do any thing they do not like, Charity makes them suppose no offence was intended.

MARY.

I thought Charity was giving money and things to the poor.

TEACHER.

That, my dear, is one kind of charity ; it is called

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called Alms-giving. This poor people can sometimes do. It is frequently in their power to help a neighbour in distress; and whenever they do so from good will, they are charitable. You were charitable the other day, when you fetched a mug of water for the poor boy who was so dry from walking in the heat; and your mother was charitable, when she asked him to sit down and rest himself before he drank it, as she was afraid it would do him harm while he was hot.

MARY. I am very glad I can do charity: I will be kind to every body.

TEACHER. I hope you will, my dear, and then I will engage to say, you will be as happy as if you had all the riches in the world. It is discontent and envy that makes poor people unhappy.

MARY. What is discontent, Madam?

TEACHER. Discontent, is thinking they have not so much money, or other things, as they ought to have; and murmuring, because they have not every thing they wish for.

MARY. What is envy, Madam?

TEACHER. Grudging other people what God has thought fit

to give them, and bearing spite against them on that account, so as to wish they may lose the advantages they enjoy. Be sure, *Mary*, to keep from discontent and envy; for they will make you more wretched than you can possibly imagine. God will not love you, your fellow creatures will despise you, and you will not be fit to go to Heaven when you die.

DIALOGUE VIII.

MARY.

POOR *Tommy Sharpe's* father is very bad, Madam, and cannot work; so his children have no victuals. While I was eating my breakfast *Tommy* came out crying, and said, He was very hungry indeed, so I gave him some of my bread and milk; his mother came home as he was eating it, and when he told her what I had done, she said, God bless you, my dear. What did she mean by that?

TEACHER.

She meant, that she hoped God would be kind to you for your charity.

MARY.

And will God bless me, Madam, and be kind to me for giving my bread and milk to *Tommy*?

TEACHER.

God loves every body who do their duty.

MARY.

MARY.

What is duty ?

TEACHER.

Duty means every thing that we ought to do. It was your duty to give a part of your bread and milk to *Tommy Sharp*. We should always assist every body we can : it is wicked not to help people when in our power to do so.

MARY.

I am very glad I gave *Tommy* my bread and milk ; it was very kind of me to give them to him, was it not, Madam ?

TEACHER.

Should you chuse to be cross or unkind ?

MARY.

No, Madam.

TEACHER.

It would have been very cross and unkind in you not to have given poor *Tommy* a part of your breakfast, when you knew he was starving for want.

MARY.

But then I was very good-natured to him, was I not, Madam ?

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear ; and we should always be good-natured, or God will not love us : do not you feel much happier now, than you would have done, if you had eaten all your bread and milk yourself ?

MARY.

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MARY. Yes, I do, a great deal.

TEACHER.

I dare say you do. Good people always feel more comfortable than those who are cross: and do not you think God is very kind to make us feel so comfortable when we only do our duty? To be good is the only way to be comfortable in this life, or go to Heaven after death.

MARY.

Indeed I will be good; and I am so glad I gave Tommy some of my bread and milk! —

TEACHER.

So am I, my dear: but do not talk any more about it: when people have done what is right they should not keep telling how good they have been; it appears as if it were very uncommon for them to be good. Do not you think it would sound very oddly, if I were to say, a great many times over, I have taken care of my family, and taught my scholars to read to-day; I am glad I have been so good. Should not you think that very strange?

MARY.

Yes, Madam.

TEACHER.

Strange indeed it would be; and yet I am glad I have done it, for it was my duty to do it; and it was your duty to part with some of your bread and milk to Tommy Sharp. We may rejoice in the

D

thought

thought that we have done what will please God, and make good people love us; but should never praise ourselves, or be proud of doing right. The best of us, *Mary*, are not so good as we ought to be.

MARY.

Then I am sure a poor little girl like me has no cause to be proud; for I do a great many wrong things.

TEACHER.

Very true, my dear, therefore never boast of your goodness any more.

DIALOGUE IX.

TEACHER.

I HOPE, *Mary*, you will be a good girl on week-days, and mind your work. Your mother has a great deal to do for your father, and little brother, and sister.

MARY.

I wish every thing grew ready made, as fruit does. Do not you, Madam?

TEACHER.

Indeed I do not. Every body should work, if it were for nothing else but to keep them in good-humour: people who are idle are generally fretful and cross. If every thing were to grow ready made,

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made, perhaps we should all be cross; and what a sad quarrelling there would be then! besides, if God were to give us victuals, drink, cloaths, and all things, ready for our use, we should have nothing to be obliged to one another for; and then we should not love one another so well.

MARY.

How are we all obliged to one another, Madam?

TEACHER.

You are obliged to your father and mother for working to maintain you; and you are obliged to me for taking the trouble of teaching you, and to the gentlemen and ladies who pay me for doing so, are you not? in short, all people in the world are obliged to others for something, which they could not have without their help; and this helping others, and being helped by them, makes, or at least ought to make us, love one another: and it is our duty to do so, because God has commanded it in the Bible.

MARY.

So then, we should always love every body, Madam, if they are kind to us?

TEACHER.

Certainly: it would be very naughty not to love them.

MARY.

Must we love those who do nothing for us?

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TEACHER.

Yes, we must love every body; for those who do not happen to do good to us, may do good to somebody else, and would to us, perhaps, if it were required.

MARY.

Surely, Madam, I need not love *Polly Pinchem*, who is always so cross to me, and treads upon my toes, and hurts me? I hate her!

TEACHER.

O fie! my dear; then you are very naughty indeed; you should never hate any body, though they have hurt you ever so much; but you should forgive them, and try to love them, and pray to God to forgive them; God chafes that we should love one another: if we do not He will not love us.

DIALOGUE X.

MARY.

YOU cannot think, Madam, how ill *Sally Crab* has used me: I do not think that I can ever love her again!

TEACHER.

I am sorry to hear that. Pray what has she done?

MARY.

MARY.

She has spoiled the pretty huswife that Miss Stanhope gave me, and broken one of my new buckles, for the purpose. Was not she very cross and naughty?

TEACHER. Yes indeed, my dear; and do think she was a very naughty girl; and if she were a scholar of mine I should punish her for it. But you will be still naughtier than she, if you resolve not to forgive her. Should not you be very sorry, if when you have done a fault God would not forgive you?

MARY.

Yes, Madam; but I am not naughty.

TEACHER. Not just now perhaps; but sometimes you are; and God does not like you should be naughty, any more than you like Sally Crab should spoil your things; and if He never forgive nor love you again, what do you think will become of you when you die?

MARY.

I do not know.

TEACHER.

You would not go to Heaven; so you must forgive, and love Sally Crab; or God will not forgive you. The Bible says He never forgives those people who will not forgive others.

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MARY.

MARY

How must I forgive her? what must I do?

TEACHER.

Go to her, and say, *Sally*, How could you be so cross as to spoil my things? I would not have hurt yours; it was not being at all good-humoured; it made me very angry at first; but it is wicked to be angry, so I am come to kiss you, and forgive you; but pray do not do so any more. Go to her, my dear, to-night; for we should never go to bed in anger. The Bible says so,

MARY. I will, Madam. I hope she will be a good girl!

DIALOGUE XI.

MARY.

I WENT to *Sally Crab*, Madam, but she said she did not want a kiss, and that the next time she finds any more of my things she will do so again.

TEACHER.

She is a very naughty girl, indeed! You must not keep company with her: we should never spend our time with wicked people, if they will not mind what we say when we advise them to be good, for fear they should teach us to be as bad as themselves.

MARY.

MARY.

Then I need not now forgive her, and love her, need I?

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear: you must not be wicked, because she is not good.

MARY.

But if she will not play with me, and says she will spoil my things, what must I do?

TEACHER.

If she will not play with you when you are kind and good-humoured to her, you must leave her to herself; only forgive her in your heart, and be ready to play with her if she should grow good.

MARY.

I cannot love her so well as I do my other play-fellows; indeed I cannot.

TEACHER.

No, my dear, nor is there any occasion to do so. You cannot love all persons alike. You should love your father and mother in the first place; then your brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts, and all your relations; but you should love every body else too, even Sally Crab, so as to wish her well, and do her good if you can, or you will be wicked.

MARY.

Was my mother wicked when she was angry with my brother yesterday, and said she would not forgive him?

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

No, she is his mother, and it is her duty to correct him when he is naughty: I dare say she loved him all the while she was punishing him; it would have been very unkind in her to let him go on in his faults, and displease God.

MARY.

Does God love wicked people?

God loves them so far that he does not desire their death; but he had rather they should grow good, that he may forgive them; but all wickedness he hates; and while people are wicked they are under His displeasure. He is all goodness.

MARY.

How do you know that?

TEACHER.

The Bible tells me so. Besides, wherever I look I can see the marks of God's kindness. The fruits, the corn, the grass, the beasts, the fishes, the air, the water, the sun, every thing we see and hear, are the gifts of God, and therefore I am sure He must be very kind and good.

MARY.

How I should like to be as good and kind as God is, I think.

TEACHER.

That, my dear, you cannot be. No creature can be as good as God is; but we should strive to imitate God's goodness as much as possible.

MARY.

MARY.

How, Madam?

TEACHER.

By doing all the good things we can. God commands us to do unto others as we would they should do unto us: that is to say, we should always be kind and good-natured, and ready to give whatever we have to any body who stands in need of it; and always forgive those who have offended us.

MARY.

Does God forgive wicked people?

TEACHER.

Yes, if they repent: but if they do not repent they never will be forgiven, and after this life will be dreadfully punished in the other world.

MARY.

How do you mean repent? What is repenting, Madam?

TEACHER.

To repent, is to be very sorry for having done wrong, and to resolve to take care never to be guilty of the same fault again.

DIALOGUE XII.

TEACHER.

I AM told, Mary, that you have been beating your sister.

MARY.

MARY.

She took my things away, and I forgot that it was wicked to beat her, Madam.

TEACHER. She is a little baby, and knows no better. If I were to beat you because you cannot read as well as *Nancy Smith*, and then say I did it without thinking, would you allow that as an excuse for my behaving so cruelly? If you were little, and your sister big, should you like she should beat you?

MARY.

No, Madam?

TEACHER.

Very well, then you have not done as you would be done by. You have offended God, Mary.

MARY.

I am very sorry I have been wicked! What shall I do now?

TEACHER.

You can do nothing now but repent. You are sorry that you have beaten your sister, you say?

MARY.

Yes, Madam?

TEACHER.

But why are you sorry?

MARY.

Because I think it was wicked and unkind to do so; and because I fear God is angry with me.

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

And you never intend to beat your sister any more?

MARY.

Indeed I will not, Madam.

TEACHER.

You resolve to be very kind and good-humoured to her?

MARY.

Yes, Madam.

TEACHER.

Very well. Then you sincerely repent; and as you do so you may ask God's pardon, not doubting but that he will grant it; for he has promised in the Bible to forgive all those who truly repent. But take care, *Mary*, that you do not mock Him, by saying you are very sorry, when you do not care at all about your faults; for that will be very wicked indeed. That is not repentance.

MARY.

Indeed, Madam, I am truly sorry, and never will be unkind to my sister any more.

TEACHER.

I hope you will not; for it is a sad thing to be cross to any body, but especially for brothers and sisters to disagree: nobody will love those who do so.

MARY.

Will nobody love me then?

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

Not if you quarrel with your sister. They will say, I will not keep company with *Mary Atkins*; she is not good-natured to her own sister; and if she quarrels with one whom she ought to love so dearly, I am sure she will be cross to me who am not her sister: so I will not be much with her. Should you like they should say so?

MARY.

No, Madam.

TEACHER.

You must also remember not to beat your school-fellows. Do you ever beat them, *Mary*?

MARY.

I beat *Polly Sparks* the other day; but she called me Cat.

TEACHER.

That was a great fault indeed. I suppose you scratched her?

MARY.

Indeed, Madam, I did not: but whenever one of us does any thing she does not like she calls us Cats.

TEACHER.

I know, my dear, that it is a very common thing for poor girls to give one another that name; but it is wicked to abuse our fellow creatures; and besides that, it is a very vulgar thing to call nick-names: but I hope children who go to Sunday

Schools

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Schools will leave off such a foolish custom, or ladies will not like to come among them.

MARY.

Then I am sure I will not call nick-names; for I should be very sorry if ladies would not come to the Sunday Schools.

TEACHER.

That they certainly will not do if you behave ill; so pray take care what you do and say.

DIALOGUE XIII.

MARY.

I WISH I could read as well as *Nancy Smith*, Madam.

TEACHER.

I wish you could, my dear; but it would be to no purpose, unless you made a better use of it than she does.

MARY.

How do you mean, Madam?

TEACHER.

The use of reading is to learn how to be good, and behave as we should do: but if we do not mind what we read, we might as well not give ourselves the trouble, or spend our time in learning. It is very naughty, I assure you, to behave like *Nancy Smith*, when we know how to do better.

E

MARY.

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MARY.

I have heard people say, Madam, that she is a very clever girl.

TEACHER.

She is in some respects a clever girl, to be sure: she reads and works very well, repeats chapters and hymns by heart, makes courtesies, and behaves very civilly to ladies and gentlemen; but still she is not a good girl: she tells fibs, and likes to deceive people; she is cunning and fly.

MARY.

How do you mean fly, Madam?

TEACHER.

I will tell you, *Mary*. *Nancy* and her sister had each of them a blue fatten pincushion given them as rewards, by a lady at the Sunday Schools; *Nancy's* was rather the least of the two, and she wanted the biggest, so asked her sister to change, who did not chuse to do so. She then asked her to let her look at it, and instead of returning the same, gave her sister the least. Only think, my dear, what a cheating, deceitful trick! I was quite sorry to see her do so.

MARY.

Do you think, Madam, God was angry about the pincushion?

TEACHER.

Yes, indeed I do: God observes every thing we do or say, and is displeased at every fault we commit,

commit, though about ever so trifling a circumstance. No sin, my dear, can be a trifle; and though a pincushion is a trifle, still *Nancy's* crime was a great one.

MARY.

I thought God only minded great things, men and women, and creatures that are alive, and not pincushions.

TEACHER.

God certainly regards how we behave about every thing that belongs to us, and takes notice whether we only use them as we should, for our advantage, and the good of others, or whether we fret and quarrel, or cheat and deceive about them. Do you understand me, *Mary*?

MARY.

Yes, Madam.

TEACHER.

I hope then you will remember what I tell you, and strive to be good; and I hope also, that when you read books that are to teach you your duty, you will be careful to follow the good directions they give; and that when you read about naughty boys and girls, you will think what a sad thing it is to be so wicked, and be sure not to behave like them; for unless you do so attend, and mind what you read, there is no use in my taking the pains to teach you.

MARY.

I will try to be always good, and never will do sly, deceitful things, from fear that God should be angry with me.

DIALOGUE XIV.

MARY.

DOES God love little children, Madam; and take notice of all they do?

TEACHER.

Yes, indeed, my dear, God does love little children, and takes as much notice of what they do, as of what men and women do. Nothing can be hidden from his knowledge; neither does He forget any thing. Therefore, when you are going to do a fault, recollect that He sees you, and will be angry if you do it; and then I think you will keep from doing wrong. If people would but give themselves time to think what a sad thing it is to make Him angry, they surely never would be wicked.

MARY.

Does God now see you and me, Madam?

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear.

MARY.

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MARY.
Can God see when it is dark?

TEACHER.
There is no darkness to God.

MARY.
But how can God see from heaven to earth?

TEACHER.
God is in all places. God is not like a man, who can only be in one place at any time. He is every where present.

MARY.
I cannot think how that can be?

TEACHER.
No, my dear, it is impossible for the wisest men upon earth to understand the nature of God, and His wonderful ways. All we know for a certainty is from the Bible, and that teaches us, that He is in all places, and able to do all things that he chuses. When we go to Heaven we shall know a great deal more of God than we can learn upon earth.

MARY.
I hope I shall go to Heaven: I wish to know more of God.

TEACHER.
Always wish so, my dear, and then you will strive to please God: you had better, a thousand and a thousand times, lose every thing this world affords, than lose Heaven. We shall live but a

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few years in this world; but, when we go to the other, we shall live for ever and ever.

DIALOGUE XV.

MARY.

IF I should die before my father and mother, and go to Heaven, who will take care of me there, and give me my victuals?

TEACHER.

In Heaven, my dear, you will need no further care of your friends: God will take care of you, and supply all your wants; and you will be perfectly happy; neither will you require any more victuals: food is only to support these bodies of flesh, but in Heaven we shall be much changed from what we are at present.

MARY.

But what will become of me if my father and mother die before me? I am sure I cannot take care of myself: and so, if they die, I shall be quite starved with cold and hunger.

TEACHER.

I dare say, my love, if you are a good girl, some friend or other will take care of you, and not let you starve: we should never make ourselves uneasy concerning troubles that are not yet come, and perhaps never may: it is not right to frighten ourselves

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ourselves with thinking we shall be starved and unhappy; for that is as if we thought God knows not what is proper for us, and cannot take care of us: but He can do every thing, and always does what is right; and if we do but take pains to be good, we may be very certain that He will love us, and take care of us, if all our friends were to die and leave us at once: He has promised in the Bible to be, A Father to the fatherless.

MARY.

That is very comfortable indeed! so if I do but try to be good, God will be my father if I should lose my parents?

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear; God is our heavenly Father at all times. It was He, you know, who made us, and has always taken care of us; and He has promised in the Bible never to forsake those who trust in Him.

MARY.

Has God promised so indeed, Madam?

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear, the Bible says, That when our fathers and mothers, and all our earthly friends leave us, God will protect us, and give us all that is necessary and proper, so that we shall not perish for want of parents, if we do but strive always to be good, and to do our duty.

MARY.

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MARY.

But if we are naughty, what will become of us when our relations and friends die?

TEACHER.

Wicked people never can be happy, though their friends should all live and be kind to them; and if their friends die, nobody will care to be troubled with them. There are a great many people who would be ready to take a good child to live with them, and love them dearly, who would not let a naughty, wicked one come into their houses.

MARY.

Would not God take care of a naughty wicked child if it should lose its parents, Madam?

TEACHER.

Though God hates wickedness, he sometimes lets wicked people live, to give them time to grow good; for He would have every body good; but if they do not repent they never can be happy here; and after this life is ended, they will be sadly punished in the life that is to come.

MARY.

Well, I will try to be good, that I may have God for my father. But I hope my father and mother will live a great while. I should cry sadly if I were to lose them: would that be wicked, Madam?

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

No, my dear; God allows us to shed tears, and be sorry, when our friends die; for the loss of friends is a great affliction; we cannot help being grieved at the thoughts of parting from them; but we must not give way to sorrow, and murmur, as if we were angry with God for taking them from us: we should be patient, and try to be glad for their sakes that they are removed from this world to a better; and we should say to ourselves, That God knows best when people should die; and we may hope, that, after death, we shall meet with our friends in a happier state, where death can never part us more.

MARY.

I will try to remember what you say, Madam: but still I hope my father and mother will live a long, long while!

TEACHER.

I hope they will, my dear: it is a very happy thing to have good parents; and as you seem to be so sensible of the blessing, I hope you will not forget to be thankful to God for it. It is your duty to pray to Him to bless your parents, and also to do every thing in your power to make them happy. Many a poor father and mother are made wretched by the undutiful behaviour of their children.

MARY.

MARY.

I am sure, Madam, I would not make mine wretched.

TEACHER.

I dare say you would not, *Mary*; nor would any child grieve a parent's heart, if they would but think what their father and mother have done for them, before they were able to do any thing for themselves. Ingratitude generally proceeds at first from want of thought.

MARY.

What is ingratitude, Madam?

TEACHER.

God requires that we should be thankful for the kindness we receive, and make a return of love and esteem to those who bestow them: the doing so is gratitude; and the not doing so is ingratitude. Being ungrateful to benefactors is a great crime.

MARY.

Who are benefactors, Madam?

TEACHER.

All persons who do us good. Next to God your parents are your greatest benefactors; and next to them you may reckon those who provide for your having a religious education.

DIALOGUE XVI.

MARY.

Is God a friend, Madam?

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear. Why do you ask?

MARY.

The other day *Sarah Light* had a letter sent to inform her that her mother was dead, at which she cried sadly, and said, Now I have no friend left besides God.

TEACHER.

God is our best friend : that is to say, He takes more care of us, and loves us better, than any body in the world can do ; and that was what *Sarah* meant when she called God her friend. Her father, mother, brothers, and sisters are all dead, and she has none of those relations left who loved her, and took care of her ; but she knows that if she is good God will take care of her.

MARY.

And is God my friend?

TEACHER.

God is a friend to every good person. He is not indeed like our earthly friends, those people whom we live and converse with in this world ;
but

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but he is better to us than any of them; for they could do nothing for us unless they were enabled to do so by God.

MARY.

How do you mean, Madam?

TEACHER.

If God did not make the corn to grow, of which flour and bread is made, your mother could not give you any to eat. If He did not make flax grow your friends could give you no linen to wear, and so in respect to all other things; therefore you see that it is He who supplies us before we can help one another; of course He is our first and best friend. Do not you think so?

MARY.

Yes, Madam, I think God is very kind; but I did not know before that we might call Him our friend.

TEACHER.

The word Friend, my dear, means one who loves and takes care of us, and helps us; and since God does that more than any human person can do, He is called our friend, though much more powerful than any man or woman. Let us then strive to keep Him our friend. Let us be very careful to do our duty, that we may please our good and kind God.

MARY.

MARY.

I am so glad to think that God is my friend!
—I shall now never be afraid to pray to Him to
bless me when I am good, and forgive me when
I have been naughty and repent.

TEACHER.

Indeed you never need, for you may depend
upon God's hearing you. He is every where pre-
sent; that is another very comfortable thought;
our earthly friends may be a great way off when we
want them; but God is ever near to hear us when
we call for help: and more than this, if we pray
to Him to defend us from dangers, every thing
that would really injure our souls will be pre-
vented from hurting us.

MARY.

Oh how I love to hear you talk about God,
Madam?

TEACHER.

What pleasure you will have then, my dear,
when you can read in the Bible, the very words of
God!

MARY.

Are God's words in the Bible?

TEACHER.

Yes, indeed they are.

MARY.

I will make haste and learn, that I may read
God's words. And when I can read them I will
mind them.

TEACHER.

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TEACHER.

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TEACHER.

Do so, my dear, and you will be for ever happy. I shall now never be afraid to bid you farewell. I bid me when I am good, and forgive me when I have been naughty, and repent.

TEACHER.

DIALOGUE XVII.

TEACHER.

WHERE have you said Mary that you are so late at school?

MARY.

I stopped to see two very naughty boys. One has been fighting, and making the other's face all bloody; and they knocked one another down, and said God every minute, though they were not reading or praying; they swore, and said a great many wicked words.

TEACHER.

That was very wrong indeed. We should never take God's name in vain; that is, we should never use His name as a common word.

MARY.

But these boys did so over and over again; were they not very wicked, Madam?

TEACHER.

They certainly were not good.

MARY.

Do you think God loves them, Madam?

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

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TEACHER.

God certainly does not love them for swearing, and taking his name in vain. But pray who were these two boys?

MARY.

One was little *Jack*, the chimney-sweeper, and the other *Tom Hanks*, who goes begging about the town. Two very naughty boys I am sure!

TEACHER.

Do not be so hasty, *Mary*, in judging others. God alone can see into the hearts of people. He alone knows whether these boys would do such bad things if they were properly instructed.

MARY.

But is it not naughty to fight and swear?

TEACHER.

Yes, to be sure. But perhaps the poor boys have never been taught their duty, and therefore are not half so wicked as you think them, or as you would be were you to swear and fight.

MARY.

Does God then like they should be naughty?

TEACHER.

No, God likes every body to be good; but He does not expect so much goodness from those who have never been taught their duty, as from those who have had pains taken to teach them what is right. I hope these two boys will go to the Sunday Schools soon, and then, I dare say, that

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they will leave off those bad tricks. Should you like to be as ignorant as they are, *Mary*, and not to be taught your duty, and how to make God love you?

MARY.

No, Madam, I should be very sorry indeed.

TEACHER.

Then you ought to think yourself much obliged to me, for instructing you; and should be very thankful to the ladies and gentlemen who pay for the Sunday School.

MARY.

That I will, Madam.

TEACHER.

And pray, my dear, mind how you behave on week days. It is not enough that you are good on *Sundays*; you must try every day of your life to grow better and better.

DIALOGUE XVIII.

TEACHER.

I HOPE, *Mary*, you always speak the truth? telling lies is one of the worst sins any one can be guilty of. God is very angry with those who tell lies: they will not go to Heaven when they die.

MARY.

Will they go to Hell then?

TEACHER.

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TEACHER.

Yes, the Bible says they will. But besides making God so angry, people who tell lies are never much loved in this world. Nobody can tell how to believe a word they say. Even when they speak truth no one believes them, for there is no depending upon them.

MARY.

Pray what is depending upon them, Madam?

TEACHER.

Believing what they say to be true, and trusting in their word. If *Molly Wright* were to tell me she had not taken any thing out of my work-bag, I should depend upon what she said to be true; because she never told me a lie in her life: but if *Kitty Slide* were to say so, I should not know how to believe, or depend upon what she said; because she has told me a fib once, and so, for aught I know, she may tell me another. Do you now understand what depending upon a person is?

MARY.

Yes, Madam.

TEACHER.

And do not you think it would be a sad thing not to have any body believe a word you say?

MARY.

Yes, Madam.

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TEACHER.

Then you must never, on any account, tell a lie. When you commit a fault you had always much better own than deny it, even though you are sure that your fault will never be found out if you do not own it. Because when you deny it you make it double.

MARY.

But suppose, Madam, that by owning my fault I get myself punished?

TEACHER.

You had better be punished than have God angry with you, and run the hazard of being punished for ever. Though you could perhaps hide your fault from every earthly creature, it would be impossible to hide it from God. He knows every thing we do and say, or even think about.

MARY.

Will not God be angry with me, if I own my fault?

TEACHER.

If your fault be sinful, you must not only own it to those whom it concerns to be made acquainted with it, but you must also confess it to God.

MARY.

How must I confess it, Madam?

TEACHER.

You should call it to mind when you say your prayers, and acknowledge to God, that you have been

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been very wicked, and say that you are heartily sorry, and hope He will pardon you.

MARY.

But if God knows I have done the fault, what need have I to confess?

TEACHER.

Because God requires that we should confess our sins, that we may be humbled, and ashamed of ourselves.

MARY.

Well then, whatever fault I do I will own it to my friends, and confess it to God, and never will tell a lie about it.

TEACHER.

I hope you will remember to do as you say, that God may love you; for nobody can be happy if God does not love them; besides, if you speak falsehoods you will lose your character; that is to say, every body will speak of you as a bad child, that is not to be depended upon. Those who are well spoken of, Mary, are said to have a good character; which had you rather have, a good character or a bad one?

MARY.

A good one, Madam.

TEACHER.

To be sure! Nobody can be happy who has a bad character: and it is a dreadful thing, indeed for poor people to lose their good name; because

every body is afraid to employ them, or to converse with them. If they are ever starving people may not believe they are in want, and so they may suffer a great deal, which industry or charity would have relieved them from, if they had always spoken the truth.

DIALOGUE XIX.

TEACHER.

WHAT were you laughing at just now, *Mary*?
Tell me the truth.

MARY.

I could not help laughing at our new scholar *Billy Flat*, he is so ugly; *Betsy Draper* calls him *Billy Crookedface*.

TEACHER.

O fie upon her! that is a very wrong thing indeed, and so it was in you to laugh. Should you, if you were so ugly, like to be laughed at?

MARY.

No, Madam.

TEACHER.

And how came it to pass that you were not so? Did you make yourself prettier?

MARY.

No, Madam?

TEACHER.

Who made you?

MARY.

MARY.

God, Madam.

TEACHER.

And who made Billy Flat?

MARY.

God, Madam.

TEACHER.

And do you think it right to laugh at the works of God? Or do you think it right to ridicule people for what they cannot help? If Billy Flat is a good boy God will love him, and all good people will love him: none but wicked persons laugh at natural deformities. It is not doing as they would be done by. Do you think it is, Mary?

MARY.

No, Madam.

TEACHER.

Very well; then never do so again. Before you die you may be as ugly as the ugliest person you ever saw in your life. A thousand accidents may make you look as badly at those you now laugh at. You may lose an eye, or an arm, or break your legs, or grow very fat, or very lean; in either of these cases I dare say you would not like to be laughed at. Should you like to hear any body say, There goes an ugly girl?

MARY.

No, Madam.

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

Then, instead of laughing at those who are ugly, lame, or any ways deformed, try to behave so, as to let them see you do not value them the less on account of what they cannot help, and endeavour to assist them, and make them contented with their condition.

MARY.

But if I were to become ugly, and should be laughed at, what must I do then, Madam?

TEACHER.

Bear it with patience, my dear, and endeavour to show that you have a good mind, though you have a bad figure. It is the mind only that God regards: the Bible says, He does not value the outward appearance, but looketh at the heart.

MARY.

I am very sorry I laughed at *Billy Flat*; but will never do so any more. Indeed, Madam, I will be as kind to him as ever I can.

TEACHER.

Do so, my dear, and then God will love you.

DIALOGUE XX.

MARY.

Is it wicked to kill wasps, and gnats, and such kind of things, Madam?

TEACHER.

TEACHER.
 Not if we kill them without tormenting them. But it is very wrong to pull them to pieces, and hurt them, without killing them, and for no use. The reason why we kill wasps and gnats is, because they bite and sting us; we do not kill them for the sake of hurting them, but to destroy them, that they may not hurt us any more; but we should be very careful when we do kill them to do it at once, as quickly as possible, that they may not suffer for any time. It is very cruel to torment any thing.

MARY.
 Does not God like any thing should be hurt?

TEACHER.
 Not at all.

MARY.
 Do dumb creatures feel as much as we do, Madam?

TEACHER.
 There is reason to think they do; and it is not unlikely, that when hurt many of them suffer more than we, because their bodies are so small and delicate.

MARY.
 Poor things! they do not cry out.

TEACHER.
 We do not know that, *Mary*; perhaps they do, but our ears cannot hear them, because their cries are not loud enough: but God can hear them;

at least He knows when we are barbarous to them, and certainly will punish us for being so; for God is a friend to all creatures that are unjustly treated.

MARY.

Then I am sure I will not hurt any creature. If any thing hurts me, I will ask somebody else to drive it away.

TEACHER.

Do so, my dear, for perhaps they may be able to put it where it will not hurt any body, and then there will be no occasion to kill it at all, you know. Life is very dear to every living creature; and as we cannot give life, we should not be fond of taking it away. You like to be alive, do not you?

MARY.

Yes, Madam.

TEACHER.

And you would not like to be cut in two, to have a spit run through your body, to have your legs and arms pulled off, or to be shut up in a box where you could not breathe, to be kept without victuals in a cage, to have a string tied to your leg or arm, and to be pulled about till your limb was broken, should you?

MARY.

No, to be sure, Madam.

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

Then I beg you will never use flies, birds, or butterflies in that manner. How common is it to see children doing those things without any thought of what the poor creatures suffer.

MARY.

I never will do any thing cruel as long as I live.

TEACHER.

I hope you will not, my dear.

DIALOGUE XXI.

MARY.

MADAM! I can tell you such a sad story of Rachel Bennet!

TEACHER.

I do not know Rachel Bennet, my dear.

MARY.

She is a very wicked girl indeed.

TEACHER.

Has she done any harm to you, Mary?

MARY.

No, Madam, I only know her by sight.

TEACHER.

Is she likely to do any harm to me?

MARY.

No, Madam; she is gone to live at another place.

G

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

Then I don't desire to hear your news; and I am sorry to find you take pleasure in publishing your neighbours' faults.

MARY.

What is publishing their faults?

TEACHER.

Telling their faults to people who did not know them, and whom it does not concern to know them. This is not kind; you would not like to be served so yourself. Do you think you should?

MARY.

No, Madam.

TEACHER.

Perhaps what you have heard about *Rachel Bennet* is not true; it may be only slander.

MADAM.

Pray, Madam, what is slander?

TEACHER.

Giving a person a bad character without cause. Never listen to ill reports of your neighbours, unless it be necessary to prevent your being injured. Children in particular should never be ready to repeat ill reports, because they are not able to judge whether they be true or false.

MARY.

But if I know myself that people do bad things, I may tell of them; may I not, Madam?

TEACHER.

TEACHER.

SUNDAY SCHOOL DIALOGUES. 43

TEACHER.
Is there a pleasure in telling tales, *Mary*?
I suppose there is, from its being so common for children to do so: I am sure it is a very unkind thing. Do you think that another person's being naughty adds to your goodness?

MARY.

No, Madam.

TEACHER.

Then I beg you will not be fond of tittle-tattle. Those children who attend properly to their own faults find enough to do. For my part it is a very unpleasant thing to me to think of other people's faults; I always rejoice to hear any one praised for being good.

MARY.

Then you did not like to tell me about *Nancy Smith's* being so naughty, Madam?

TEACHER.

Indeed, *Mary*, I did not; but as you seemed to admire her, I thought it was necessary to point out her faults to you, that you might not be guilty of the like; but I should not have mentioned them if any body had been by, to whom it would have been of no use to tell them. You are very young, and very ignorant, you know; and unless you are told what is right, and what is wrong, you might be apt to fol-

low bad examples. So I hope you understand why I told you of *Nancy Smith's* bad behaviour?

MARY.

Yes, Madam, I do.

DIALOGUE XXII.

MARY.

I THINK a great deal about God and my duty, Madam; and I wish to say more to Him than the short prayer you taught me, pray teach me that which the great girls say.

TEACHER.

That I will, my dear. Repeat after me.

A PRAYER for SUNDAY SCHOLARS.

O GOD, my heavenly Father, my Creator and Protector! Thou hast been pleased to assure us in the Scriptures, that thou wilt graciously attend our prayers; and hast also promised to assist, with thy mighty help, all those who heartily pray to thee, and put their trust in thee. Even the prayers of a child who calleth upon thee sincerely and earnestly, thou wilt accept.

Behold

SUNDAY SCHOOL DIALOGUES. 65

Behold then, O Lord! me thy poor child now kneeling before thee, beseeching thy forgiveness of all my past sins; and thy assistance to enable me to do my duty for the time to come. I feel myself so often inclined to do wrong, that I dare not suppose I shall not be guilty again; but I am very sorry for my faults, and pray thee to forgive me, and to grant me wisdom and strength for the time to come, that I may leave off my sins, and, as I every day advance in years, may increase in all virtue and goodness.

I thank thee, O God! that it hath pleased thee to grant me the advantage of being admitted into a Sunday School, so that I may learn my duty, be instructed how I must behave to gain thy favour, and be useful to my fellow creatures.

Bless, O Lord! I beseech thee, all my benefactors and teachers, and make me humble and modest, grateful and attentive to them. Bless also, I most humbly beseech thee, my dear father and mother, my brothers and sisters, together with all mankind; and grant, that while we all live we may strive to assist each other, and lead such virtuous lives on earth, that after we quit this world, we may rejoice together in thy heavenly kingdom for ever and ever. Grant, this, O God! for *Jesus Christ's* sake, through whose name we pray unto thee. Amen.

TEACHER.

66 SUNDAY SCHOOL DIALOGUES.

TEACHER.

This is a long prayer, *Mary*; I fear you will not very soon get it by heart.

MARY.

Yes, Madam, I shall, I dare say. *Betty Price* says she will hear me repeat it every day.

TEACHER.

That is very kind of her; but so people should behave to one another. If every one would do what is in their power to help and please their neighbours, what a deal of happiness there would be in the world! Poor people would not have half so much distress as they now have.

MARY.

When I have learned the prayer I will teach it to somebody else.

TEACHER.

Do so, my love; that will show your gratitude to God for giving you such a friend as *Betty Price*.

MARY.

I shall be glad to show gratitude to God; but pray, Madam, who is *JESUS CHRIST*?

TEACHER.

Our SAVIOUR, my dear. I shall very soon let you know what the Scriptures say about him.

MARY.

The Scriptures, Madam?

TEACHER.

SUNDAY SCHOOL DIALOGUES. 67

TEACHER.

Yes, my dear; the Bible and Testament I mean.

MARY.

O how I do long to read the Bible!

TEACHER.

You shall read some of it very shortly; and may God open your mind to understand it!

THE END.

SUNDAY SCHOOL DILOGUES
TEACHER
Yes, my dear; the Bible and Testament
mean
I want
I now I do long to read the Bible!
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